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Security Council

Sixtieth year

Provisional

5294th meeting

Thursday, 27 October 2005, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Motoc	(Romania)
Members:	Algeria	Mr. Baali
	Argentina	Mr. Mayoral
	Benin	Mr. Idohou
	Brazil	Mr. Valle
	China	Mr. Wang Guangya
	Denmark	Ms. Løj
	France	Mr. Duclos
	Greece	Mr. Vassilakis
	Japan	Mr. Kitaoka
	Philippines	Ms. Cruz
	Russian Federation	Mr. Rogachev
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Emyr Jones Parry
	United Republic of Tanzania	Mr. Mahiga
	United States of America	Mrs. Patterson

Agenda

Women and peace and security

Report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security (S/2005/636)

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05-57370 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Women and peace and security

Report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security (S/2005/636)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Canada, Croatia, Egypt, El Salvador, Fiji, Germany, Guinea, Iceland, Indonesia, Italy, Kenya, Liechtenstein, Malaysia, Myanmar, Namibia, Norway, Peru, Samoa, South Africa, Sri Lanka and Sweden, in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, the representatives of the aforementioned countries took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, the Security Council has extended invitations under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Ms. Rachel Mayanja, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, and Ms. Noeleen Heyzer, Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women.

It is so decided.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Ms. Sweeta Noori, Country Director for Afghanistan of Women for Women International, and Ms. Hélène Dandi, Regional Adviser for West Africa of the Network of African Women for Peace.

It is so decided.

I invite Ms. Noori and Ms. Dandi to take the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Ms. Elsie-Bernadette Onubogu, Gender Adviser of the Commonwealth Secretariat.

It is so decided.

I invite Ms. Onubogu to take the seat reserved for her at the side of the Council Chamber.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Anders B. Johnsson, Secretary General of the Inter Parliamentary Union.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Johnsson to take the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2005/636, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security. I should also like to draw attention to document S/2005/664, which contains a letter dated 24 October 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Romania, addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a concept paper for this meeting.

I welcome the presence of the Deputy Secretary-General, Her Excellency Ms. Louise Fréchette, at this meeting.

By way of introduction, I would like to say that it is a particular pleasure for me to open the debate today to observe the anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security. This resolution was indeed a turning point in the activity of the Council, as it underlined the essential contribution

women make to peace and security. Five years after its adoption, this meeting will express our collective resolve to enhance the role of women in conflict prevention and resolution. I trust we shall have a successful debate.

During the preparations for the meeting I have seen goodwill, commitment and support from many of our partners and I would like to take the time to thank as many of them as members' patience will allow.

I turn first to our colleagues from the Permanent Mission of Denmark to convey our appreciation for their dedication and professionalism in organizing the Arria formula meeting held two days ago. It goes without saying that the work, the views, the concerns and the lessons non-governmental organizations can share with us enjoy the recognition of the Council, and of our countries, in particular. We cannot hope for the successful implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) without a broad and inclusive consultation with the representatives of civil society.

My thanks go also to the Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women. Our colleagues in the United Nations Secretariat have been helpful and contributed substantively to the outcome of our meeting today.

Later on I will invite participants to view a video featuring an interview with a woman who was a former peace negotiator and who is currently a member of parliament in Burundi, as well as interviews with other, similar women leaders. The film illustrates women's participation in rebuilding conflict-torn societies. I want to express my gratitude to the United Nations Development Fund for Women for providing us with this inspiring documentary.

Finally, I would like to thank all speakers in advance. I can assure them that their observations and recommendations will be well received and will be a subject for future reflection in the Council.

I now invite the Deputy Secretary-General, Her Excellency Ms. Louise Fréchette, to take the floor.

The Deputy Secretary-General: First, let me thank you, Mr. President, for convening this open debate to mark the fifth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000) and for devoting it to the topic of women's participation in peace processes.

The principle of women's participation is at the heart of resolution 1325 (2000). That landmark document called on Member States to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels.

Awareness and recognition of that issue have grown considerably in recent years, both in conflict-affected societies and in the international community. Yet five years after resolution 1325 (2000) was adopted, in most parts of the world — and particularly in those suffering from armed conflict — women are still not adequately represented at the negotiating table, the Cabinet table or the conference table. Clearly, Governments must redouble their efforts.

So must we in the United Nations itself. We need to appoint more women at senior levels of peace operations, and in that we must be more proactive. But we also rely on Member States to present us with strong candidates.

We need to develop a more systematic approach to consulting with women in the earliest stages of a peace process, including in discussions on constitutional development, judicial reform and reconciliation. And we need to maintain the utmost vigilance in preventing further instances of sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations personnel and peacekeepers, which have caused such damage to the standing of our peace operations and have inflicted such wounds on the very people we are working to help.

In a moment, the Council will hear a statement from Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, who will present an update on the progress of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations towards the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). They will also hear from Ms. Rachel Mayanja, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, about the Secretary-General's report of 10 October on women and peace and security (S/2005/636), which contains a system-wide action plan on the implementation of the resolution. In addition, the Council will hear a statement from Ms. Noeleen Heyzer, Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women.

The Secretariat looks forward to the Council's advice and practical support in carrying out initiatives to implement resolution 1325 (2000), in finding better ways to empower women, in sharing good practices and in enhancing women's role in decision-making at

all levels. I hope this debate will help move that process forward. In that spirit, I wish members a most successful meeting.

The President: I thank the Deputy Secretary-General, Ms. Louise Fréchette, for her statement.

The Council will now have an opportunity to see the video to which I referred in my opening remarks.

A video was projected on screen.

The President: I thank the United Nations Development Fund for Women for presenting us with that powerful video projection. We also often speak about how to foster proactive approaches to women's participation in decision-making processes and their involvement in rebuilding their societies. Watching that film, I think that we have seen that women can be powerful negotiators and strong advocates for peace and reconciliation.

One high-ranking United Nations official who is also familiar with such experiences is the head of our Organization's Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Under-Secretary-General Jean-Marie Guéhenno, to whom I am very pleased to give the floor.

Mr. Guéhenno: I am pleased to be able to take this opportunity to share our thoughts on the progress that has been achieved, as well as the challenges that remain, in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security, adopted five years ago.

To start with, I would like to share five concrete examples of how progress is being achieved by peacekeeping missions on the ground. First, we successfully integrated a gender perspective in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process in Liberia, which ensured that the eligibility criteria were revised to include women who played support roles to the combatants as cooks, porters, sex slaves or spies, and who oftentimes served as part-time combatants. Over 21,000 women were demobilized as a result, and many of those women contributed important information on where arms caches were hidden. In Burundi, 231 of the 485 disarmed female ex-combatants have been recruited into the newly restructured police force as part of their reintegration.

Secondly, in the policing sector, gender advisors provide training to police personnel in restructured police forces to ensure that victims of rape and other forms of gender-based violence have access to confidential and gender-sensitive case reporting. The first specialist police unit to deal with gender-based violence crimes in peacekeeping missions was established in Timor-Leste, and similar units have since been established in other missions.

Thirdly, much work has been done to promote women's participation in transitional Government institutions. In the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), the gender unit helped introduce a minimum 33 per cent quota for women into the UNMIK Regulation on Elections for the Parliamentary Assembly of Kosovo, which led to 28 per cent of seats being filled by women in 2001. More recently, the support of gender units in Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Burundi has been instrumental in ensuring that newly-adopted constitutions provide guarantees for women's rights. This year, for the first time in its history, Burundi elected over 30 per cent women to the National Parliament and, as members just saw in the short film that was presented, to the positions of Vice-President and Speaker of the National Assembly. Many women in Burundi have also attested to the importance of having a female Special Representative of the Secretary-General as a role model to spur their political aspirations.

Fourthly, gender units are supporting the capacity development of national counterparts in the governmental and non-governmental sectors in all mission areas. In Afghanistan, that includes capacity development of women's affairs departments in 29 provinces across the country. In Côte d'Ivoire, the gender unit is supporting mobilization of women's groups representing political parties, trade unions and non-governmental organizations to create a common platform to promote women's participation in decision-making.

Fifthly, gender units are supporting the integration of gender perspectives into the judicial and legal sector through the implementation of training activities for judges, lawyers and prosecutors in a number of missions, including Kosovo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Furthermore, in Liberia, the gender unit is supporting national partners in their efforts to adopt a new rape law and, in Timor-Leste, similar support is ongoing for the adoption of a bill on domestic violence.

One must also recall, in addition to those concrete examples, some of the very significant developments of increased political participation of women in post-Taliban Afghanistan and in newly independent Timor-Leste. The new Afghan Constitution guaranteed Afghan women a minimum of 25 per cent of the seats in the Lower House of Parliament and approximately 17 per cent in the Upper House. In the lead-up to the presidential elections in 2004, an interagency Elections Task Force chaired by the Gender Advisor was established to monitor, amongst other things, the level of voter registration of women. Out of 10.5 million Afghans who registered to vote in those elections, 40 per cent were women. The number of female registered voters increased to 44 per cent during the parliamentary elections in September 2005.

The Constituent Assembly which wrote the Timorese Constitution became the country's first Parliament and women accounted for 27 per cent of those elected to the Constituent Assembly, an achievement which surpassed the representation of women in many parliaments around the world. As the Special Representative of the Secretary-General at the time, the late Sergio Vieria de Mello, admitted subsequently, he had himself initially been against the creation of a gender affairs unit in the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor, as he had not realized what an important impact the work of such a unit would have in helping to rebuild Timorese institutions from scratch and ensuring that the guarantee of women's equal rights was imbedded in all the new institutions of Government.

Those developments should not, however, make us complacent, as the road ahead is a long and arduous one. Our most severe setback in recent years has been the damning and shameful revelation that some of our peacekeepers have been engaged in the sexual exploitation of women and girls who rely on them to promote a safe environment. Beyond pointing to a series of systemic weaknesses that account for such gross misconduct, that problem should be a wake-up call for all of us to attach even more importance to incorporating a gender perspective into our work. Ultimately, we will not be able to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse in peacekeeping contexts without empowering women and girls. We must also remember that gender mainstreaming is much more than the issue of sexual exploitation and abuse.

I should not have to clarify that, but it must be noted that a significant proportion of peacekeeping personnel still do not have a conceptual understanding of what gender mainstreaming entails, nor have they grasped that it is about more than just hiring more women. That may explain in part why we have yet to institutionalize many of our gender mainstreaming strategies. Too often, it is individual commitment, rather than institutionalized mechanisms, that drives our work. We have also made limited progress in increasing the number of female personnel in peacekeeping, particularly in uniformed functions and in senior leadership positions. The perspectives of women are still not adequately harnessed to inform our planning and operational activities. Thus, whilst gender advisors hold regular consultations with women leaders and civil society organizations in peacekeeping missions, such consultations are not established practice for all mission components.

In recognition of those shortcomings, in March of this year I issued a policy statement on gender mainstreaming in peacekeeping that provides an operational framework at the field and Headquarters levels to implement resolution 1325 (2000). As part of that policy, and in line with the recommendation of the Council last year, my Department is currently finalizing a comprehensive action plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) that builds on the system-wide action plan that is before the Council today.

In renewing my Department's commitment to the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), I intend to vigorously address these challenges in the coming years. Our work will be focused on five main areas.

First, I will emphasize, more than I have done in the past, that the responsibility for implementing the resolution does not fall on the shoulders of our gender advisers alone, or solely on our female staff. All men and women, particularly at senior levels, at Headquarters and in the field, have responsibilities to implement the resolution.

Secondly, I will ensure that all existing and future policies and guidance of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) incorporate the relevant provisions of resolution 1325 (2000).

Thirdly, I will emphasize a commitment to gender mainstreaming within all reporting and accountability mechanisms at our disposal.

Fourthly, I will work to ensure that we make marked progress towards increasing the numbers of women in peacekeeping.

Fifthly, I will review and refine the partnership frameworks that guide our collaboration with United Nations agencies and with Member States in the implementation of the resolution.

Those strategic objectives have emerged from the ongoing process to design a DPKO action plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Thus far, individual DPKO offices have outlined strategic objectives and actions, which will be consolidated into one Department-wide plan in the coming weeks. As a first step in ensuring senior management accountability and ownership of this process, I will soon meet with the senior management of DPKO to review the action plan and to outline concrete steps to facilitate its full implementation.

My managers and I will do what we can to continue to implement the resolution. However, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations is only one part of the equation. We will rely on many others as well to make a difference, starting, of course, with the parties to the conflicts themselves as well as with the States Members of the Organization. There are many concrete things that States Members of this body, and those contributing personnel, could do to further the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). I respectfully suggest five in particular.

First, it is necessary that Security Council members and troop-contributing countries alike engage with the issue of women and peace and security on an ongoing basis, beyond just a gathering of this nature once a year.

Secondly, the agenda of Security Council visits to peacekeeping missions should always provide for meaningful discussions with women leaders and with representatives of women's organizations. That should translate into subsequent actions to strengthen the role of women in peace processes.

Thirdly, the Security Council itself could consider designing an action plan to guide its role in monitoring the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

Fourthly, while recognizing that Member States have generally limited numbers of women serving in their national military and police forces, much more can be done to deploy women from countries that have the capacity to do so.

Fifthly, it is vital that meaningful pre-deployment gender training be provided to uniformed peacekeeping personnel — women and men alike — to ensure that they understand how critical their contribution is to the implementation of the resolution.

In short, all Member States must take ownership for this work, just as we are trying to do in DPKO. Without that collective effort, we fail the women of the countries in which we are working and weaken the foundations for sustainable peace.

The President: I thank Mr. Guéhenno for his statement.

I now give the floor to Ms. Rachel Mayanja, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women.

Ms. Mayanja: I am honoured to have the opportunity to speak at this open debate of the Security Council on the subject of women, peace and security. I thank the President for convening this discussion on women's participation in peace processes.

This discussion is taking place as we mark the fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Security Council's historic resolution 1325 (2000), and a month after the General Assembly's adoption of the 2005 World Summit Outcome (General Assembly resolution 60/1), which reaffirmed the commitment of world leaders to the full and effective implementation of the resolution.

The resolution fundamentally changed the image of women from that of being exclusively victims of war to that of being active participants as peacemakers, peacebuilders and negotiators. Women at the grass-roots level in countries as diverse as Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burundi, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, the Sudan and Timor-Leste have used the resolution to lobby for their voices to be heard in peacebuilding processes, in post-conflict elections and in the rebuilding of their societies.

Since the resolution was adopted, a lot of progress has been made within the United Nations

system itself in terms of understanding how to incorporate gender concerns into all aspects of peace and security. Department-specific action plans on gender mainstreaming are being prepared; gender-sensitive guidelines and new tools in a variety of areas have been issued; and staff are being trained.

Despite that progress, gaps remain. Women's and girls' bodies have become battle grounds. A lot remains to be done in such critical areas as conflict prevention and early warning, capacity-building for peacemaking and peacebuilding, protecting women and girls, combating gender-based violence and preventing sexual exploitation and abuse, to name a few.

As requested by the Council in its presidential statement contained in document S/PRST/2004/40, a system-wide action plan to implement resolution 1325 (2000) has been developed, in cooperation with the Inter-Agency Task Force on Women and Peace and Security. The plan, to which 37 United Nations entities contributed, is before the Council in the report of the Secretary-General contained in document S/2005/636.

The objectives of the action plan, which covers the period from 2005 to 2007, are to formulate concrete strategies, actions and programmes to promote the role of women, support efforts by Member States and civil society and strengthen the commitment and accountability of the United Nations system at the highest levels.

Resolution 1325 (2000), along with three subsequent Security Council presidential statements, constituted the conceptual framework of the plan. The Summit Outcome, the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (A/59/565) and the Secretary-General's report entitled "In larger freedom" (A/59/2005) provided a broader political background, shifting from a focus on State security to one encompassing human security.

The plan is structured on the basis of 12 areas of action identified in the resolution and the three presidential statements. Each United Nations entity identified specific time-bound activities and strategies to be undertaken within its mandate. The responsibility for the implementation of activities lies with each of those entities.

The key to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) is accountability and commitment. An analysis conducted by my Office of resolutions adopted by the Security Council in the period July 2004 to July 2005 revealed that language on women or gender issues was included in only 14 per cent of 63 resolutions. The reporting to the Council on gender issues by the Secretary-General has dramatically improved, with 47 per cent of the reports making multiple references to gender concerns, compared with 17.8 per cent in the period 2000-2003.

In order to enhance accountability, the report of the Secretary-General proposes, inter alia, the following measures: more systematic oversight and monitoring of progress at the inter-governmental level; enhanced inter-agency coordination through the High Level Committee on Programmes of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination; holding heads of entities directly accountable for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in their respective programmes and operations and developing internal accountability procedures; and increased interaction at all levels with civil society.

The success of the implementation of the plan depends on five factors: effective support and accountability on the part of the Security Council; commitment at the highest levels of United Nations entities; full cooperation by Governments, parties to conflicts and women's organizations with United Nations entities; effective inter-agency coordination; and, sufficient resources to do the job.

The Peacebuilding Commission approved at the General Assembly summit will have an opportunity to make an effective contribution to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). I am convinced that the Commission would greatly benefit from women's active participation in its deliberations, systematic gender mainstreaming in its work and dialogue with women's groups and non-governmental organizations.

My recent mission to the Sudan reinforced my conviction that we must urgently accelerate the full and effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Women shoulder the main burden of post-conflict problems and are the primary victims of unspeakable sexual and gender-based violence. I call on the Council to hold the parties to conflicts fully accountable for protecting women's human rights, and on donors to ensure that humanitarian and development assistance reaches women.

Gender equality is absolutely essential to the success of any peace process. We must use the

untapped potential of women in maintaining peace and security. As the international community struggles with how to respond to global threats and challenges and as the Secretary-General undertakes far-reaching steps in implementing the Summit Outcome, it is vital that we make the principles of resolution 1325 (2000) and women's contributions an integral part of all of our efforts.

I urge all members to ensure that discussions on reform and on country-specific conflict situations include practical strategies to accelerate the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). I call on all Member States to adopt strategies and action plans for implementing resolution 1325 (2000) and for promoting women's participation. Without the equal participation of women in all decision-making processes in the United Nations, including the Council, and within Member States, the vision outlined in the Charter will elude us.

Before closing, I would like to say that I participated this morning in a cyber-dialogue organized by the International Women's Tribune Centre, during which women from Timor-Leste, the Philippines, Zimbabwe and other countries asked me to convey to the Council the urgency of the need to accelerate the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

The President: I thank Ms. Mayanja for her statement.

I now give the floor to Ms. Noeleen Heyzer, Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women.

Ms. Heyzer: I would like to thank you, Mr. President, and the other members of the Security Council for having given me the honour of addressing the Council on the important issue of women's participation in peace processes, on the fifth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000). The participation of women in all aspects of peace processes and attention to the needs and priorities of women are not simply gender-equality goals. They are crucial to just and sustainable peace. Women know the cost of war, what it means to be displaced, to be excluded from public life and to be regarded as less than full citizens. They know the realities on the ground and what needs to be done to address the injustices of war and prevent a relapse into conflict. They can be, and must be, part of the lasting peace.

The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) has worked in over 20 conflict-affected countries to help bring women to the peace table and strengthen their role in peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction. Our work has focused on supporting women's rights and inclusion in constitutional, legal-reform and institution-building processes, as well as on strengthening women's leadership and participation in decision-making. We have seen that women can foster ties among opposing factions across political and ethnic lines so as to generate genuine dialogue. They can bring a different perspective to peace negotiations, raising critical issues — from land rights to rape babies — that might otherwise be overlooked. And they can build a foundation to sustain peace. Our work has generated some very important lessons that I would like to share today.

The first lesson relates to the issue of creating a more inclusive society. Peace processes, if they are to be effective, need to take into account women's experiences and capabilities. Failure to do so leads to a justice deficit for women and girls and to a framework for peace and security that fails to address their human rights and socio-economic conditions. The range of issues covered in peace agreements and the process of implementation are then limited to men's experiences of conflict, men's expectations for peacebuilding and men trying to forgive men for crimes against women.

The fact that peace agreements are silent on critical issues affecting the lives of women and girls means that the human rights of half of the population are ignored, undermining the foundations of societies emerging from conflict that are aspiring to establish democracy and the rule of law.

In resolution 1325 (2000), the Security Council spoke with one voice in emphasizing the need to mainstream gender justice and gender equality in all peace processes. Resolution 1325 (2000) has been the bedrock of support for the efforts of women to participate in peace processes and the building of institutions and to insist that the injustices they have suffered in conflict be addressed. The overriding goal for women is social transformation, not their reintegration into a system in which they are marginalized. They seek full citizenship, social justice and empowerment based on respect for international standards of human rights. If they are to make real

progress, they need our commitment and support, as required by resolution 1325 (2000).

The second lesson relates to developing a common women's agenda. Our experience in supporting women in peace processes — from the Mano River countries to the Great Lakes, the Sudan, Somalia, Afghanistan and Timor-Leste — has shown the importance of developing and implementing a common women's agenda for promoting peace and security that transcends political and ethnic lines and advances gender equality. But this entails a long-term commitment of support and requires an investment of time, effort and resources to enable women from different sides of a conflict to come together to identify common priorities and goals.

In such countries as Afghanistan and Colombia, UNIFEM and its partners have supported national forms of consultation on women to build these common agendas, and these have been used by our national machineries as a basis for constituency-building for their work in the early stages of rebuilding.

In the Sudan, building on a long-term partnership with Sudanese women, UNIFEM, together with the Government of Norway, convened in April a meeting of women from the north and the south to develop a common agenda to be presented to the Oslo Conference. In Kosovo, where we assisted women in developing a common national action plan, women are now asking UNIFEM to assist them so that they can be at the table where future status issues are being discussed.

The process of uniting around common priorities for peace is a vital first step, but we have learned that such international support must be provided in a way that allows women to take full ownership of the priorities established. Our role is to be a trusted partner and honest broker.

An example of that role was seen in July this year, when UNIFEM was asked by Israeli and Palestinian leaders to organize a dialogue among women so as to identify their common priorities for peace. That resulted in the formation of an International Women's Commission to support a just and sustainable peace, which was recently endorsed by a presidential decree by the Palestinian National Authority. The Parliament of Israel has also endorsed resolution 1325 (2000) and the participation of women in the peace process.

The third lesson is creating an environment to facilitate women's effective participation. While women are advocates for their participation in peace processes, quotas can do much to ensure their greater participation. At the same time, women's effectiveness can be enhanced by the facilitators of these processes, who can play a critical role in bringing local women leaders and women's groups engaged in informal peace processes into the formal peace processes. But we need to ensure that women remain involved throughout the phases of implementation.

Another important element is the composition of the facilitation team, which should have equal representation by men and women and a solid understanding of gender issues. The role and leadership of a Special Representative of the Secretary-General is also critical, as we have seen in the situation in the Great Lakes region.

In addition, women in conflict-affected countries have also called on many of our partners to support them in capacity-building and the technical skills needed to participate effectively in peace processes. In Afghanistan, for example, UNIFEM has supported networks of women lawyers and judges involved in drafting the constitution and has supported women's participation as voters and as candidates.

Fourthly, in terms of achieving justice for women, peace agreements often fall short of providing any strategy or resources to ensure implementation or measures to sanction non-action, especially with regard to issues affecting women. It is clear from our work on gender justice that justice and peace are closely interlinked. Gender justice can no longer be bargained away as a "soft chip" for realizing other political and operational gains. It must be central to any rule of law organization.

But many of the needs of women can be realized very easily if the international community is serious about supporting and resourcing them, focusing on addressing the most pressing needs of women who are victims of war, who are trafficked or infected with HIV/AIDS, who are widowed, refugees or internally displaced.

But at the heart of the implementation of any real justice in countries recovering from conflict is the

demand that human rights violations against women and girls be treated and regarded as crimes by the criminal justice system. Gender justice must not be left to the realm of customary and traditional legal systems.

In terms of moving forward, we would all agree that today resolution 1325 (2000) has a growing constituency in countries around the world. However, if that constituency is to move beyond women's rights advocates to make a real difference in the lives of women and girls, it must be embraced by men and boys, emerging countries and Governments, multilateral and regional organizations, and donors. In moving forward, I would like to suggest some ways to ensure that existing United Nations mechanisms, as well as the Peacebuilding Commission, work on behalf of women as well as men to meet the calls made by resolution 1325 (2000).

First, the United Nations needs to adopt a more holistic one-system approach to systematically address the needs and capabilities of women throughout all phases from conflict to peace. This has to be done in a seamless flow. It must ensure that UNIFEM has a seat at every table.

Women and the civil society of a conflict-affected country, including in the rural areas, must be involved at every stage in the assessment and planning of such work.

Finally, there must be increased outreach to men and boys of a country so that they truly understand that promoting gender equality and gender justice benefits women and men alike. But the focus must be not only on the men and boys of the conflict-affected country. It must also be on United Nations peacekeepers and staff putting an immediate stop to the sexual exploitation of the very women they are supposed to protect. Only then will peace, including peace in the home and in the field, be possible for women after war, and only then will women be able to contribute as full citizens to build a better society for all.

The President: I give the floor to Ms. Sweeta Noori, Country Director for Afghanistan of Women for Women International, whom I invite to take a seat at the Council table.

Ms. Noori: I wish to thank you, Mr. President, for allowing me to take part in today's open debate. I appreciate the opportunity to share my thoughts and observations about the role of women in peacebuilding in Afghanistan.

From my point of view, there are two Afghanistans. The United Nations sees one Afghanistan, which is progressing and developing. Yet there is another Afghanistan that the international community does not see. It is violent, unstable and, in many ways, very scary for women. That is why it is absolutely critical to remain fully engaged in Afghanistan.

We have heard some very good news from my country. A record number of women will be members of Parliament. But we must also recognize the many challenges women face. We Afghans and the rest of the international community must close the gap between the two Afghanistans so as to bring true democracy, security and peace to the country as a whole.

We have seen much progress after the fall of the Taliban. In Afghanistan, we have a Constitution that finally recognizes equal rights for women and gives women full rights to political participation. This is ground-breaking and gives all Afghan women hope.

We now have a Ministry of Women's Affairs. At the provincial level, there are local women's councils. Afghanistan has elected its first woman Governor, in Bamyian province, in the central region. Three ministerial-level positions are held by women. The Constitution also sets a quota for Afghan women's representation in Parliament and guarantees them 50 per cent of the presidential appointments to the Upper House.

The numbers are impressive and significant, and we are hopeful. But numbers alone cannot not paint a full picture of the realities facing women on the ground in the country.

Women candidates needed their husbands as well as family approval to run for office. Independent female candidates often lacked the money and support necessary for campaigning, unlike those supported by warlords and political parties. Warlords and their followers threatened independent women candidates with violence and even assassination. The warlords also threatened women voters to keep them from participating in the political process, to stop them from choosing their future leaders. Women voters received threatening phone calls, e-mails and even flyers delivered in the middle of night that said, "Do not vote,

or else your husband, your children or you yourself may lose your life."

It took great courage to run for office and to vote. In the hidden Afghanistan — the one that is not in front of cameras or United Nations monitors — exercising one's rights can be a life-or-death choice.

As I weave my life through the two Afghanistans, I see islands of peace. There is growing stability and political participation in the areas where there is a strong presence of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). But just a few steps away, local and national Government officials ignore the status of women and women's rights when they feel no pressure from the international community.

In those areas, the Constitution and international norms do not rule. Traditional tribal rule shapes how a woman is treated and what her rights are — if she has any at all. I hear stories from local communities about forced marriages and child marriages. Women are not given a choice in those arrangements; they are considered property to be exchanged between families. Sometimes, daughters and sisters are used to settle disputes between families.

I also hear stories about severe domestic violence, but women feel they have nowhere to go. They cannot go to the authorities because they will be jailed for making complaints against family members. There are no safe shelters outside the city of Kabul.

Last year, in a Red Crescent hospital in Kabul, I met a 17-year-old woman who was three months pregnant. She suffered such great violence at the hands of her husband and in-laws that she poured petrol on herself. She died from her petrol burns. This year, there were 75 reported cases of self-immolation in the city of Herat in western Afghanistan alone.

The poppy eradication programme and the halt to illegal narcotics trafficking in the country has had a negative impact on women. Many farmers are waiting for a sustainable alternative to poppy crops. In the meantime, women are suffering.

Let me explain. Again and again, I hear of poppy farmers who sell their daughters to repay their debts to drug traffickers. The forced loss of poppy crops has left farmers unable to repay the drug traffickers who lent them money to buy seeds. To settle their debts, the farmers are turning to a traditional Afghan practice of handing over sisters and daughters.

I urge the international community to support the rule of law, not the rule of individuals, warlords or fundamentalists in my country.

There cannot be one Afghanistan for men and another for women. Right now, 10 per cent of the reconstruction money channelled through the National Solidarity Programme is set aside for local women's councils for projects identified as women's priorities. Yet, as I travel to rural areas, I discover that many women's councils are either unaware that they should have access to that money or, when they are aware of that fact, I often find that the priorities of the men's councils supplant those of the women's councils. Often, women politicians and council members are used as window dressing, while men continue to dominate the setting of the agenda.

There are specific needs of women that must be addressed. Eighty per cent of the female population is illiterate. We need schools that educate girls as well as women. An addition, one in six Afghan women dies in childbirth due to complications during pregnancy. We need female health professionals and health clinics to address the basic physical, emotional and gynaecological needs of women.

We need to identify a new generation of Afghan women leaders and give them tools and resources to develop their potential. That way, when women candidates run for office, they will not need to rely on money from warlords or fundamentalists but can be successful independent candidates.

However, I have heard from the Ministry of Women's Affairs that we can not train Women for Women International participants on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which Afghanistan ratified in 2004. We were told to wait until the Ministry of Justice and a council of Islamic judges approve the Convention.

The agenda of Afghan women remains unfinished. Presidential and parliamentary elections are good markers for progress, but peace and security in Afghanistan will take a long-term commitment by the United Nations and ISAF. We urge the Security Council to consider extending the mandate of ISAF and expanding its work throughout Afghanistan.

Continued insecurity also undermines the safety and progress of women. We urge the Security Council and international organizations, such as the United

Nations Development Fund for Women, to support Afghan authorities and women's groups in peacebuilding in Afghanistan. We should have a full partnership that develops the capacity of women and protects their human rights.

We urge the Security Council and the international community to fully implement alternative livelihood initiatives for farmers through the poppy eradication programme and recommend that the United Nations and the international community work with the Afghan judicial system so that judges, police and local leaders act in accordance with the rule of law, not traditional law, which undermines women's rights.

Lastly, I recommend that the Security Council and the international community help civil society, especially women's groups, promote Government accountability.

We do not want the international community to abandon Afghanistan before we have secured a stable future for all women, men and children. Peacebuilding in Afghanistan must continue. We need women. We cannot ignore women when rebuilding a nation. When women are left behind, there can be no peace, and Afghanistan will continue to be weak.

Let me conclude by saying that without strong women, we cannot build a strong nation.

The President: I invite Ms. Hélène Dandi, Regional Adviser for West Africa of the Network of African Women for Peace, to take a seat at the Council table and to make her statement.

Ms. Dandi (*spoke in French*): My name is Hélène Dandi Lou, from Côte d'Ivoire. I am responsible for a peace organization. I am one of the 1,000 women nominated for the 2005 Nobel Peace Prize.

At the outset, I would like to express my deepest appreciation to the Government of Romania, the members of the Security Council and the Non-Governmental Organization Working Group on Women, Peace and Security for giving me the honour of speaking before the Council.

I take this opportunity to thank, on behalf of my country, Côte d'Ivoire, and in particular on behalf of women and children, the organizers of this meeting, the international community, the Economic Community of West African States and the African Union, as well as all those individuals of goodwill who are sparing no effort to restore peace to Côte d'Ivoire.

I also welcome the Council's statement of 14 October 2005, which endorsed the proposals of the African Union to resolve the crisis in Côte d'Ivoire. I sincerely thank the African Union Mediator in the Côte d'Ivoire crisis, His Excellency Mr. Thabo Mbeki, President of the Republic of South Africa, for the real efforts he has made in favour of a prompt return of peace in my country.

However, it is important to stress that this peace has been contested by the opposition, which claims that the United Nations has created a situation of great uncertainty for Côte d'Ivoire through its decision to maintain in power His Excellency Mr. Laurent Gbagbo for a period of 12 months. The purpose of my presence among you is to share our vision of the importance of the commitment of women to all activities in support of peace. It is about presenting an analysis of the participation of women in the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire and to make a series of recommendations for the better promotion and implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), as well as the more effective participation by women in the peace and security process.

Concerning such an analysis, resolution 1325 (2000) requires that women be present in all actions of the United Nations involving reconstruction, consolidation and the maintenance of peace and security.

In Côte d'Ivoire, the coup of 1999 and the military transition that ended with the controversial elections held on 2 November 2000 that put President Gbagbo in office have left us with a number of latent conflicts within the population that could add to the weakening of the social fabric.

In order to re-establish social cohesion, a Forum of National Reconciliation was initiated in October 2001 by His Excellency, Laurent Gbagbo, President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire. It was the first genuine opportunity offered to Ivorian women to become actively involved in the search for peace. Unfortunately, that platform did not attract widespread participation by women and women's organizations that were working for peace. In fact, a number of women, unaware of the existence of resolution 1325 (2000), were unable to make use of the opportunity to prevent the risk of the conflicts that were spreading

throughout the country. Rather, they were weighed down by a guilty silence that left male politicians the latitude to poison the situation.

At that time, I tried to make others aware that we needed to show restraint in order to save Côte d'Ivoire. However the limited participation by women and the lack of concerted action among them did not permit them to obtain effective results.

With the outbreak of the crisis in September 2002, actions to promote resolution 1325 (2000) evolved and favoured greater participation on the part of Ivorian women in the process of restoring peace and security. However, those actions were limited to certain women leaders and could not reach the grass-roots community organizations for a number of reasons. They include the following: sociocultural factors relating to the role of women in African society that reduce them to a state of silence, the high illiteracy rate among women, the lack of means of action for the efficient promotion of resolution 1325 (2000) and for the effective involvement of women in the prevention and the resolution of conflicts, the low economic capabilities of women and the low level of financing of programmes supporting women.

In order to bring peace back to Côte d'Ivoire, a number of peace agreements were signed, without the effective participation of women, except for a few who belonged to political parties that were involved in the crisis. From Lomé to Pretoria II, via Marcoussis, Accra I, II and III and Pretoria I, women have been ignored, indeed sidelined, from the process, despite the active involvement of the United Nations as the major guarantor of the promotion and implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Why is that the case? We women want to know why the resolution has not been implemented. It is not surprising to note the passivity of women in the process of restoring peace and security, since they have not been made part of the discussion.

Today, my country, Côte d'Ivoire, remains divided. The social climate is characterized by a crisis of confidence and visceral hatred. Insecurity is recurrent throughout the country, and it is the women and children who continue to pay the heavy price. They still carry the stigma of trauma and they live in silence. As an example, in the area of Bouaké, an occupied area, and in the western part of the country, which was terribly affected by the war, there are thousands of women who have been raped since 2002. They live alone, completely bereft, and until now have not received any medical, psychological or material assistance.

In spite of it all, resolution 1633 (2005) on the Côte d'Ivoire, adopted by the Security Council on 21 October 2005, does not mention the role of women, nor does it even consider gender. I would like to know why not.

It seems essential to us to bring out the strengths and weaknesses of resolution 1325 (2000) and to suggest recommendations to provide for better implementation of that resolution.

In terms of strengths, the resolution does give more responsibility to women in decision-making bodies. It gives more power to women to act in favour of peace and security. It takes into account women's priorities. It has awakened conscience among women and gives them the power to be heard.

The weaknesses of resolution 1325 (2000) lie in its lack of effective implementation. The resolution is unknown to women at the grassroots levels. The means to act on and implement the resolution are insufficient. It is not being implemented by States. The resolution is not being sufficiently implemented by institutions, including the United Nations. There are no mandatory measures to prompt States to effectively implement the resolution. The resolution does not create conditions for its optimal use by women, given that it should be a powerful weapon in their hands. Resources for women working for peace are insufficiently utilized by the United Nations and there, too, we would like to know why not. There is no follow-up in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

On the basis of all of those points, it is important to make the following proposals. First, Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) should become known within associations, in women's cooperatives, in urban and rural areas. Secondly, clubs should be established for its promotion and popularization among women's movements. Thirdly, the media should become involved in promoting the resolution by disseminating it throughout each country. Fourthly, a follow-up team should be established to ensure its implementation. Fifthly, women's capacity in the areas of prevention, mediation and management of conflicts should be strengthened. Sixthly, documents about resolution 1325 (2000) should be made available to women's

organizations. Seventh, financial and concrete support should be provided through grants to women's organizations that are working for peace, security and development so they can be more effective in their work.

Additionally, it is important to organize conferences, town-hall meetings and workshops on Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) in order to develop some proposals that will help us better to promote the resolution; to establish follow-up committees on resolution 1325 (2000) in order to ensure its effective implementation by States and produce reports for the United Nations Security Council; to create a platform for exchanges among women displaced by war and refugee women so as to allow them to get to know one another, exchange views and have their voices be heard as the major casualties and bring them to contribute to the process of peace and security and to help promote Security Council resolution 1325 (2000); prioritize the financing of economic activities for women who are victims of war and to motivate them motivated and facilitate their effective involvement in the processes of peace and security and promotion of the Security Council resolution. Before concluding, I wish to reiterate my sincere thanks to the Security Council for this laudable initiative, which today has allowed women to be heard.

It is true that peace must absolutely come from the Ivorians; at the same time, I would like to call on the international community and on African institutions, such ECOWAS and the AU and all people of good will and peace-loving people to tirelessly pursue their efforts to bring about a final return to peace in my country, Côte d'Ivoire.

With respect to involving women in the peace process, our experience on the ground demonstrates that the financial autonomy of urban and rural women is a major factor in motivating them and enabling them to become more actively involved for peace. The refugee and displaced women whom we have met say that true peace is first of all the freedom to move freely, to have the wherewithal to educate their children, to carry out economic activities and to get back their dignity by improving their social conditions.

I would like to conclude my statement by recalling that women are a very effective element in the prevention and management of conflicts, because women are at the centre of communities. As a spouse, a woman can convince her husband. As a mother and teacher, she can talk to her children. As a sister, she can speak to her brothers in order to deter them from taking weapons to kill. That is why, as long as women are barred from the negotiating table owing to their social status or their gender, it will be difficult to talk about sustainable peace throughout the world and, in particular, in Africa.

Without women, what is the future of Côte d'Ivoire? Without women, what is the future of Africa? Without women, what is the future of mankind?

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached among Council members, I wish to remind all speakers to kindly limit their statements to no more than five minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Delegations with lengthy statements are kindly requested to circulate their text in writing and to deliver a condensed version when speaking in the Chamber.

Before opening up the floor to Council members, it is my pleasure to acknowledge the presence here today of a fine group of students from John C. Whitehead School of Diplomacy and International Relations. I am told that their professor, Mr. Courtney Smith, accompanied them to the United Nations to witness the celebration of the sixtieth anniversary of our Organization and to observe the deliberations of the Security Council. Let me say that we appreciate their presence, and I hope they will find our discussions pertinent and inspiring.

Mr. Mahiga (United Republic of Tanzania): At the outset, let me register Tanzania's sincere appreciation to the delegation of Romania for organizing this open debate on Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). This debate is coming at an opportune time after world leaders adopted an outcome document last month that affirmed gender equality and the promotion, protection and full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms as essential in advancing and complementing development, peace and security.

Today, on the fifth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), we celebrate and further affirm the indispensable role of women in conflict prevention, resolution and peacebuilding. My delegation associates itself with the statement to be made by Namibia on

behalf of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) member States.

The close interlinkages between security, development and human rights have revealed the imperative of an integrated approach to peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. Over the past five years, we have underscored what should be the central role of women in conflict prevention, peace advocacy, negotiations and the implementation of peace and security agreements. The proposed Human Rights Council and the Peacebuilding Commission will be crucial to the promotion and protection of the rights of women. The ongoing discussions on the formation of these new organs present us with an entry point to anchor the effective involvement of women as participants in and beneficiaries of the mandates of the two organs to ensure gender justice and gender equality.

The adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on 31 October 2000 marked a turning point in the protection of women in conflict situations, as well as ensuring their right to participate fully in peace processes. As an equal component of any society, women should have equal and active participation in formulating political, economic and social policies. Furthermore, as victims of exclusion, vulnerable targets in conflicts, mothers and breadwinners, women have high stakes in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and all issues related to peace and security in society.

However, we note with concern the absence of women, not only in peace processes, but also in most spheres of decision-making. The absence of women is further reflected in the reports of both the Secretary-General and the Security Council. There is thus a need to increase gender training at all levels of peacekeeping operations. Gender training and placement should not be taken as ad hoc measures, but ought to be mainstreamed affirmatively. This shift requires a change in attitudes and mindsets towards the status and capabilities of women. We acknowledge the progress made by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) with regard to the issues of peace and women and mainstreaming. We encourage the Department to continue its expeditious implementation of the policy outlined this morning by Mr. Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

Resolution 1325 (2000) broke new ground by empowering women — who are often both the deliberate targets and silent victims of violent conflicts — in the critical areas of war, peace and security. The effective implementation of the resolution is therefore a necessity, and we are encouraged by the formulation of a system-wide action plan for that purpose. The action plan presents us with an implementation framework that will allow for coordination and collaboration among the various United Nations bodies. It will also provide us with a monitoring framework upon which to measure results. Requisite resources, both financial and human, need to be made available for the successful implementation of the action plan.

While we recognize the positive role of peacekeeping personnel, we are appalled by the few elements that are still tarnishing the good reputation and the overall credibility of the United Nations. Sexual exploitation and abuse of civilians by peacekeeping personnel is a violation of the trust of those who delegate to them the responsibility to protect — and it should be condemned by all of us. We commend the Secretary-General's policy of zero tolerance for acts of sexual harassment and abuse. To prevent further sexual exploitation and abuse, all allegations should be investigated and reported and the Security Council and the troop-contributing countries should take more robust measures.

We also believe that the spirit and letter of resolution 1325 (2000) should apply in peacekeeping missions, with the greater involvement and participation of women at all levels. That will inject more gender sensitivity in peacekeeping mandates and in implementing strategies for the protection of civilians in conflict and post-conflict situations.

Finally, in the envisaged Peacebuilding Commission, the role of women in post-conflict situations should be central from the very beginning at all levels, particularly at the country level, with the visible participation of civil society. This is a unique opportunity to incorporate gender issues as integral components of the transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding, and finally to sustainable development.

Mr. Vassilakis (Greece): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for taking the initiative to organize today's open debate on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). I also wish to thank the

Secretary-General for submitting a very comprehensive report (*S/2005/636*) along with a detailed system-wide action plan for the implementation of that resolution. Naturally, our thanks go as well to all those who contributed to that report, among others, Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Ms. Rachel Mayanja and Ms. Noeleen Heyzer.

The issue of women, peace and security is of great interest and of paramount importance across the globe, especially for the many countries in conflict or post-conflict situations, and also for the United Nations.

Greece fully aligns itself with the statement to be made on this topic by the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom on behalf of the European Union.

Five years ago, the Security Council adopted resolution 1325 (2000). It is a landmark. It called for women's equal participation and their full involvement in conflict-prevention efforts, peace negotiations, peacekeeping operations, humanitarian assistance, post-conflict reconstruction and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration initiatives, as well as for their protection from human rights abuses in conflict situations.

Since then Member States, United Nations entities and civil society actors have made significant efforts to implement the resolution. Despite significant achievements, however, major challenges remain in all areas.

Resolution 1325 (2000) stresses the role of women in the prevention of conflict and the need to increase their role in decision-making in conflict prevention. There is no doubt women's contributions to preventing conflicts are particularly important in people-to-people diplomacy. Women can play a critical role in building the capacity of communities to prevent new or recurrent violence. We should assist them more effectively in that direction.

We welcome the various initiatives taken by Member States, the United Nations and civil society to support and increase the representation of women in peace negotiations and to mainstream a gender perspective in peace agreements. Developing and implementing post-conflict strategies and programmes that take into account women's needs is also very important. We must encourage and strengthen all those initiatives.

The principle is as old as our world. In that connection, I would recall the anti-war masterpiece that Aristophanes wrote in 411 B.C., the *Lysistrata*. That comedy focuses on the effects of the Peloponnesian war and the efforts of an Athenian woman named Lysistrata to stop the war and secure peace through negotiations with and the support of other women from the enemy cities of Sparta and Corinth.

A major element for the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) is the incorporation of a gender perspective in post-conflict reconstruction efforts. All relevant actors should do more to ensure the inclusion of the gender aspect in their reconstruction strategies and programmes.

Building and sustaining peace in a coherent and holistic manner and guaranteeing a smooth and enduring transition to peace was one of the great concerns in the recent High-level Plenary Meeting. The creation of a Peacebuilding Commission, and the Peacebuilding Support Office to pave the way for that transition, gathered extensive support in the meeting. In that context, we must ensure that the Peacebuilding Commission will contribute meaningfully to the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). We strongly believe that the Peacebuilding Commission offers the international community a major opportunity to guarantee that a gender perspective becomes a regular part of any peacebuilding process.

Gender-based violence in armed conflict is another key target of resolution 1325 (2000). Preventing and responding to that kind of violence remains one of our greatest priorities. Despite improved prevention and protection mechanisms, the response of the international community remains inadequate. In our view we should increase pressure on the parties to armed conflict to halt sexual and gender-based violence — including trafficking in persons — and to put an end to impunity for such crimes. Compliance with international humanitarian and human rights law must be ensured.

Having to prevent and respond to the sexual exploitation and abuse of local populations by humanitarian and peacekeeping personnel seriously impedes our ability to achieve the goals of resolution 1325 (2000) and remains one of our greatest priorities. Nevertheless, we must express our satisfaction at the significant progress made in implementing the

resolution through the measures undertaken by the Secretary-General. Here I would recall that the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations has paid increasing attention to issues concerning women, peace and security and that gender concerns are being raised in all new peacekeeping operations.

Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes remain primarily focused on male ex-combatants, even though women and girls are also involved in armed groups. The establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission should contribute to the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and pay increased attention to the needs and contributions of women and girls in post-conflict peacebuilding.

In our view, the key issue remains the better implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). We need more systematic gender mainstreaming into all policies and programmes at the international and national level. We should emphasize the need for the development of national plans, building alliances, inventing new monitoring devices, and ensuring access of all those concerned to United Nations organs. Enhanced cooperation with the countries in conflict areas and awareness of key players are prerequisites.

National initiatives and national plans are very significant. In that context, I would like to recall that Greece, while holding the European Union presidency, produced a paper on the integration of a gender dimension into the EU's external relations policies. At the same time, we organized the Athens Forum on "Gender, Peace and Foreign Policy: The EU Perspective". In that respect, we must stress the existing cooperation between the European Union and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the readiness to continue such cooperation with other international organizations and non-governmental organizations.

In closing, I re-emphasize that what is required for the full achievement of the goals set out in resolution 1325 (2000) is continuous and strong political will, translated into action and accountability on the part of all players, national or international, Member States, the United Nations and civil society organizations.

Mrs. Patterson (United States of America): I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your selection of this topic for your presidency's thematic discussion. We would also like to thank the speakers for their contributions to our understanding of this issue. The United States agrees that the United Nations must acknowledge and strengthen the role of women in the peace process, and we take seriously the challenge of bringing women as the equals of men into the mainstream of decision-making in that regard.

Owing to their particular experiences, we believe that women can and do bring certain unique qualities and perspectives to the peace process. Women have been historically underrepresented in most peace negotiations. In the past, women's traditional roles in society have often been the excuse for that exclusion. Ironically, those same roles as child-bearer and nurturer lend a perspective that is all too often ignored.

I should like to mention the opportunity I had to witness the role that women had played in the peace process in El Salvador when I served there a few years after the peace agreement. Women may have constituted up to 40 per cent of the troops of the guerrilla group FMLN, so they naturally became major figures in the peace process. That gave them visibility, which they then used to get elected to public office. One of the major female guerrilla leaders ran for the office of Vice-President a few years after the peace agreement. These Salvadoran women lobbied to reflect gender equality in what became the FMLN party, and their advocacy led to the establishment of a women's secretariat in 1993 and to the establishment of a 30 per cent quota for that party in 1996. But it was not just women on the left who raised their political profile during the peace process; women of all political parties and beliefs became involved.

Involvement of women in the peace process and then, very importantly, as political figures advances what are sometimes called women's issues generally. Most important, in the Salvadoran Assembly, women from the far left to the far right — many of them elected during the multi-year peace process — formed a women's caucus that focused on issues of particular interest to women, such as maternal and infant mortality, the rights of children, sex crimes and domestic violence.

To cite a case in point, all the female legislators became extremely active in raising awareness about domestic violence, writing legislation to criminalize it and setting up shelters for abused women and children. The Salvadoran First Lady made that her particular issue. In a few short years, domestic violence had

become unacceptable; women felt confident in reporting abuse to the authorities, and programmes — including counselling for men — were instituted throughout the country to combat it. Domestic violence, which had previously been considered a private matter, had become a serious crime.

Women in El Salvador were also very active in local and national reconstruction efforts. Many women who had been members of armed groups became involved in large- and small-scale construction projects. Their experience as combatants challenged many of the prewar conceptions against such labour and forced society to further recognize the role they could play.

Today, women in El Salvador continue to be key actors in that society. Galvanized and infused by political activism during the war, Salvadoran women continue to be highly organized at all levels of society. The success of El Salvador's peace process is, in many ways, the result of women being involved in the process from the outset. I might add, too, that the United Nations played a critical and very successful role in the Salvadoran peace process.

I realize that El Salvador may be different from other post-conflict situations, in that a high percentage of women were directly involved as leaders in the conflicts, so their participation in the peace process was more natural. And in general, women have made huge legal and political strides in Latin America in the past 30 years, serving as Presidents, Ministers of Defence and heads of parliament, so the involvement of women in the peace process naturally reflects their role in larger society.

To state the obvious, El Salvador is not Afghanistan, and very different strategies will be required to involve women in peace processes and reconstruction, depending on the local situations. Despite persuasive arguments for the inclusion of women in the peace process, there is enormous resistance to the notion in most parts of the world. The exclusion of women from important decision-making is still deeply ingrained in many societies. Changes to that way of thinking will require conscious, deliberate effort by all of us, particularly in the international and NGO communities, in order to further involve women in the peace process. Society not only dictates the need for women to be involved in the peace process; it demands it.

Mr. Idohou (Benin) (*spoke in French*): We wish to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this public debate and to thank Mr. Guéhenno for his statement.

By adopting resolution 1325 (2000) five years ago, the Security Council set for itself the objective of providing the international community with a common frame of reference for guiding the action of States, international institutions and civil society in gender mainstreaming. The Secretary-General's assessment of the resolution's implementation clearly shows both progress and shortcomings.

Since the adoption of the resolution, we are beginning to see a change in attitudes about the situation of women as well as concerted action at all levels to give women their rightful place in our societies. We welcome the joint efforts of Member States, the United Nations system and civil society organizations — particularly women's groups — which have succeeded in bringing about a reversal of the negative tendencies that the resolution seeks to correct. The heart-rending accounts that the Council heard during the Arria formula meeting held on 25 October enabled its members to be convinced of the crucial role that women can and must play in conflict prevention and settlement, particularly in post-conflict reconstruction and recovery.

Since 2000, there has been a better understanding of the role that women should play in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and of the need to recognize and promote their contribution to the establishment of lasting peace. Here, we commend the initiative of the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict, the Peace Mission of African First Ladies and the approaches taken by various interested partners aimed at defining a set of indicators that take into account the special situation of women when elaborating and implementing conflict-prevention and early-warning mechanisms.

We particularly welcome the Secretary-General's proposal of a global strategy to be implemented in the United Nations system, including an action plan defining priority areas of action to be carried out in the process of its implementation. That global strategy will enable the United Nations, non-governmental organizations and other interested partners to act together in a coordinated manner to promote women's full participation in conflict prevention activities and to integrate their needs and priorities into data collection

and analysis for conflict prevention and early-warning strategies.

We note with satisfaction that considerable progress has been achieved with respect to peacekeeping operations in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). The Republic of Benin welcomes the drafting of a comprehensive strategy and action plan to integrate gender issues into peacekeeping activities here at Headquarters and in the field, in particular in the planning for new operations, which will now have targeted monitoring and follow-up mechanisms. That represents a major step towards the measurable enhancement of the United Nations system's contribution to empowering women in conflict areas.

Despite such considerable progress, we are disturbed by the emergence in some peacekeeping deployment zones of the phenomena of human trafficking and persistent sexual and physical violence against women and children. We pay tribute to the Secretary-General for his bold initiatives to combat those phenomena. Efforts in that field must be pursued and complemented by the international community's adoption of new measures to ensure greater protection for women and children in conflict and post-conflict situations.

In our view, the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) must be fully integrated into the mandate of the peacebuilding commission envisioned by heads of State and Government at the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly at its sixtieth session. The commission would do well to mainstream gender issues through broader consultation with civil society, and women's organizations in particular. In that respect, we express our full support for the Secretary-General's recommendations on specific measures to be taken at the intergovernmental level, systemwide at the United Nations, within its agencies, and at the national level to improve implementation of the resolution. They will help to institutionalize the role of women in preventing and settling conflicts and in peacebuilding.

Finally, we believe that the Council should consider practical provisions to ensure more effective follow-up to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in order to promote gender equality proactively as a means of promoting international peace and security. A periodic report on the implementation of the Secretary-General's action plan would serve that purpose well. Similarly, the appeal launched by non-governmental organizations for the establishment of a Security Council working group on that issue deserves consideration. Such a working group could provide real added value as a framework for cooperation among the partners in a regular assessment of progress. The international community could, in the near future, thereby do justice by the other half of the world's population by recognizing and valuing the role it plays in the maintenance of international peace and security.

Mr. Baali (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I wish to thank you, Sir, for having organized this public meeting on the eve of the fifth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security.

I also thank Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Ms. Rachel Mayanja and Ms. Noeleen Heyzer for their excellent introductory briefings.

We also listened with great interest to the statements made by Ms. Sweeta Noori and Ms. Hélène Dandi and wish, through them, to pay an enthusiastic tribute to the dynamic role played by non-governmental organizations in the field under discussion today.

Along with children, women are the primary casualties of conflict, and yet they have no means of preventing them and are often excluded from peace processes and decision-making posts. The adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) was thus a qualitative leap in every respect in our efforts better to protect women in situations of armed conflict and to promote their driving role and key place in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction. The need to integrate gender equality into conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peacebuilding has thereby been most solemnly affirmed, which we warmly welcome.

The briefings we have heard at this important debate give us a comprehensive view of actions undertaken by the Secretariat, peacekeeping missions, the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, and the United Nations Development Fund for Women in implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

It is truly satisfying to note that the specific situation of women and girls and their needs as

vulnerable persons are now a focal point of United Nations action in the field of peacekeeping. Moreover, laudable efforts have been made to ensure better representation of women at all levels of decision-making and in the management of peace missions.

Furthermore, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 59/300 on a comprehensive review of a strategy to eliminate future sexual exploitation and abuse in United Nations peacekeeping operations, radical efforts are expected from peacekeeping missions and troop-contributing countries to put an end to the serious offence and shameful practice of sexual abuse uncovered in certain United Nations missions mandated to protect civilian populations, particularly women and children, in situations of armed conflict.

At the same time, much remains to be done and we must now honour the commitment undertaken at the September summit to the effective and comprehensive implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Indeed, that was the common understanding that emerged from the Arria formula debate organized by the mission of Denmark.

The issue of women, peace and security is indeed multidimensional and multisectoral, transcending the mandate of the Security Council. That is especially true given that the Council does not address the issues of extreme poverty, official development assistance, special economic assistance, the debt burden, the deterioration in the terms of trade, and so on, the consequences of which are especially tragic for women. Moreover, we must not impinge on the prerogatives of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council or the Commission on the Status of Women, which are the appropriate bodies for the development of policies and norms with respect to the status of women and gender equity. It is therefore important to ensure that the Council act hand in hand with the other participants in the system.

Pursuant to the presidential statement contained in document S/PRST/2004/40, the Secretary-General has just submitted an action plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) across the United Nations system. As his report reveals, this is the first time that the system has undertaken such a broad and complex planning task encompassing virtually every major field of activity related to women, peace and security.

We will follow with great interest the implementation of that ambitious yet realistic action plan, and of course we endorse the Secretary-General's recommendation that a biennial report on the implementation of the plan be submitted to the Council; we feel that it might be submitted to the General Assembly as well.

Lastly, my delegation would like to thank the delegation of Romania for the preparation of the draft presidential statement, and to assure it of our full support.

Mr. Mayoral (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is an honour for my delegation to participate once again in an open Security Council debate on the subject of women in conflict situations. We are therefore especially grateful to you, Mr. President, and to the delegation of Romania for having chosen this subject on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). We are certain that this debate will be an excellent opportunity to look into the obstacles that continue to restrict the participation of women in peace processes, as well to exchange experiences on the involvement of women in those processes.

We would also like to express our gratitude for the participation in this debate of Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno; Ms. Rachel Mayanja, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women; and Ms. Noeleen Heyzer, Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women. We are grateful too for the presence of civil society organizations. All of them agree about, and are providing us with further information on, the situation of women in the developing world. That should encourage us to bear in mind that the struggle to achieve development is also a struggle on behalf of women and that vulnerable groups are the main victims of underdevelopment.

Five years ago, when the Council adopted resolution 1325 (2000) — and my country was then a member of the Council — we encouraged greater participation by women in the area of peace and security. Today we are certain that the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) was an important milestone in the history of women's participation throughout the various phases of conflict. Resolution 1325 (2000) is the appropriate legal framework within which Member States and United Nations bodies can increase the

participation of women in this area. However, we know that there is unfortunately still a significant gap between the legal framework and the reality of implementation.

This year we mark the fifth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000). Five years after its adoption, we must acknowledge that, although the subject of women in the areas of peace and security has become more visible within the United Nations system and a series of measures have been implemented to make their participation effective, there continues to be a gender gap, which we must work to bridge. Women are still underrepresented in peace processes and continue to be the victims of serious human rights violations during armed conflict. As we renew our commitment to resolution 1325 (2000), it is imperative that we translate that commitment into concrete action.

We recall that our debate last year focused on gender-based violence. The Romanian presidency has now called on us to consider in particular the participation of women in peace processes and post-conflict peacebuilding. We are convinced that such processes will be lasting and effective only if they take into account the perspectives and interests of all actors, men and women alike. Women have demonstrated that their presence can spark a peace process and that their participation has been very important in ensuring lasting and more just peace.

In my country, Argentina, the role played by women's organizations, including the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, during the unfortunate military dictatorship was very important in making Argentina's society, as well as the world, aware of the serious human rights violations that were being committed. Subsequently, once democracy was re-established, the Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo continued their search for children born in detention, almost 100 of whom have been found to date.

We therefore believe that we must increase our interaction with civil society on the ground, especially by working with women's organizations, to ensure that women are taken into account not just during peace process negotiations but also during the drafting of legislation and the establishment of new national institutions.

We take note of the report of the Secretary-General (S/2005/636) containing the action plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) throughout the United Nations system, which was developed as a result of a request by the Security Council. Bearing in mind the importance and scope of that initiative, we believe that the Secretariat should supplement the information provided in the report of the Secretary-General in an interactive format that includes the participation of all Member States.

This year, heads of State and Government reiterated their commitment to the dual role of women in situations of armed conflict, both as peacemakers and as victims of the most unjustified violence. The 2005 World Summit Outcome (General Assembly resolution 60/1) provides for the establishment of a Peacebuilding Commission that, among other things, would have a mandate to intensify work with civil society in order to collect accurate information about conflicts and prevent new ones from occurring. We hope that the Commission that we are in the process of establishing will interact with civil society and will bear in mind women's concerns in a range of areas, so that women can participate on an equal footing with men in peacebuilding processes and in the future political life of their countries.

We urge the Security Council to continue to make efforts towards the effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in the field. Among those efforts, we suggest the appointment of gender advisers in peacekeeping missions, the mainstreaming of the gender perspective in field visits and missions and the need to maintain contact with civil society, especially with women's organizations. In that connection, we would like to thank the delegation of Denmark for holding an Arria Formula meeting on this issue.

We also urge the Council to draw the Secretary-General's attention to the need to appoint more women at the decision-making level, including as his special representatives. We also call upon Member States to put forward female candidates for such positions. We believe that, along with the implementation of the Secretariat's action plan, the Council should establish some sort of regular monitoring mechanism for the resolution.

The obstacles to the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2005) arise from both the instability of conflict situations themselves and the lack of respect for the human rights of women. We are aware that the latter falls within the purview of other bodies, such as the Third Committee of the General Assembly and the

Economic and Social Council's Commission on Human Rights and, with respect to social and legal status, the Commission on the Status of Women. In that regard, we call upon Member States to carry out the commitments they have entered into, especially under the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, known as Beijing + 5 (General Assembly resolution S-23/3). As I have stated, resolution 1325 (2000) is the framework for the protection of the rights of women in conflict situations. However, it also belongs clearly within the broader framework of respect for human rights.

Lastly, although I realize that it is not the primary subject before us today, we cannot fail to condemn acts of sexual violence by United Nations personnel in the field. As a troop-contributing country, we acknowledge our responsibility for educating and training our troops. I also wish to say that there is a need to take every preventive action and adopt a zero-tolerance attitude towards those responsible for such violence.

Ms. Løj (Denmark): Let me begin by thanking the delegation of Romania for having convened this meeting, once again focusing the attention of the Security Council on the indispensable role of women in all efforts to build and maintain peace and security.

I would like to associate my delegation with the statement to be delivered later by the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom on behalf of the European Union.

Armed conflict affects women and men in different ways. The scale and the character of the violence committed against women and girls in conflict situations is shocking. It is unacceptable and utterly deplorable when rape, sexual abuse and HIV/AIDS are used deliberately as weapons of war.

But women are not only victims. The resources women possess are striking. In many cases women are the sole providers and protectors of their families — often under extremely difficult circumstances — in the local community, in refugee camps or as internally displaced persons. Their engagement must be at the core of any peacebuilding initiatives and reconstruction efforts.

Experience shows that the involvement of women in conflict resolution and peace negotiations speeds up the peace process and contributes to sustainable solutions. It is important, however, to underline that the early involvement of women in the peace process can create a platform for women's further engagement in the reconstruction and development of their countries.

Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) is unique. It focuses on the need to protect the rights of women. It also underlines the need to use the resources possessed by women before, during and after a conflict. Resolution 1325 (2000) has great potential because it is comprehensive. The challenge is to transform words into action. Unfortunately, the challenge is as great today as it was five years ago.

Coordination between the various actors involved and their civilian and military instruments and capabilities must be improved. That applies to the United Nations, to the multilateral and regional organizations and to Member States, as well as to non-governmental organizations. Denmark is convinced that the Peacebuilding Commission can play a key role in achieving that. It goes without saying that the provisions of resolution 1325 (2000) will be important guiding principles for the work of the Peacebuilding Commission.

As Member States, we also have an obligation to implement the resolution in the best and most effective way. In June, the Danish Government launched a national action plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). Denmark is firmly committed to implementing all elements of resolution 1325 (2000). The action plan is the result of the fruitful cooperation between Denmark's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its Ministry of Defence. It outlines a series of political and operational actions engaging foreign, defence and development cooperation policies, each of which is of equal importance for the full implementation of the recommendations set out in resolution 1325 (2000).

We warmly welcome the system-wide action plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) presented here today. The action plan responds to the need for more systematic implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in all United Nations activities related to conflict and for greater coordination throughout the United Nations system.

The Secretary-General's report points out the need for the formulation of strategies, actions, programmes and enhanced inter-agency cooperation. Denmark is especially happy to see that strengthened

commitment and accountability at the highest level in the United Nations is one of the objectives. It is of crucial importance that the United Nations — now and in the future — demonstrates full commitment to the action plan at all levels.

The report contains 12 areas of action, including the full range of activities before, during and after conflict. The issue of responding to sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations staff, related personnel and mission partners is one of the key areas of action. Sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeeping forces and other United Nations staff must be stopped. We — the United Nations and Member States — need to demonstrate firm action and prosecute the perpetrators, who are violating not only our trust, but the trust of those they were send to help and protect. The policy of zero tolerance has to be implemented.

When resolution 1325 (2000) was adopted it was a major accomplishment. However, the resolution will truly benefit women living in conflict only when the recommendations have had an impact on all areas of intervention and cooperation. As is always the case at the United Nations, the real challenge is to move from good intentions and strong words on paper to concrete results on the ground. That is always difficult, but it is never impossible.

Denmark believes that national action plans are the first step on the way. We urge other Member States to systematize their efforts and develop national action plans to ensure the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). The members of the Security Council could lead the process and set an example.

Only by taking action can we make a difference for the millions of women in conflict situations. Let us take the responsibility upon ourselves to make the resolution on women, peace and security a reality.

Mr. Duclos (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for having taken the initiative to hold this debate today.

At the outset, I would like to say that my country's thoughts are with Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi, who has been prevented for far too long from playing her rightful role in contributing to peace and democratization in her country.

France fully associates itself with the statement to be made later by the representative of the United Kingdom on behalf of the presidency of the European Union.

We have been taking stock of the situation five years after the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). I will not go into too much detail, but I would like to focus on three important elements.

The first relates to the raising of awareness of the consequences and implications of conflict for women today. The world has experienced the nightmare of people being persecuted and massacred because they belonged to a particular racial minority. Given the geopolitical aspects of conflict today, we see that women often suffer and become victims because they are women.

Secondly, resolution 1325 (2000) has changed the way in which the Council looks at the issue. Women are victims, but they are also active participants in settlement and reconstruction processes.

Thirdly, the daily work of the Council has changed as a result of resolution 1325 (2000). Today, the role of women is taken into account when we draw up the mandates for peacekeeping operations, when we listen to reports in the Council and when we elaborate provisions and establish parameters. Of course, that is not sufficient. We must continue, and, if possible, speed up the process that has been in place since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). Let me propose several courses of action, to be taken simultaneously.

The first course of action involves national strategies for implementing the resolution, and perhaps a regional plan of action on the European Union model. At the national level, France, for its part, just a few years ago adopted a national charter of action on equality. We intend, when we review that Charter in 2007, to include many more detailed provisions as a result of resolution 1325 (2000).

As a second course of action, we must support the Secretary-General's efforts to implement the resolution throughout the United Nations system. We listened with great interest to Ms. Mayanja, who shared with us the action plan that she has drawn up, which we support. Of course, that plan should followed up regularly at all levels, including in the Security Council.

Turning to the third course of action, the Council's action, as I said earlier, evolves on a daily basis; but this must become a reflex. This 1325 (2000) reflex, if I can call it that, will be reflected in the Council mission led by Mr. de La Sablière to the Great Lakes region, which will involve a systematic dialogue with local non-governmental organizations that represent women. Likewise, since we will be in an area where there are a considerable number of peacekeeping operations, the Security Council mission will focus in particular on the question of sexual abuse in peacekeeping operations.

The fourth course of action, which has been touched on a by a number of previous speakers, is, of course, to use the current institutional reform process to advance the agenda set out by resolution 1325 (2000).

As others have done, I would make reference to the Peacebuilding Commission and to the Human Rights Council. We believe that the Council will have a crucial role to play in ensuring dignity for women. In our view, the fact that it can meet on an urgent basis when required will be pivotal in addressing the specific needs of women in the area of human rights.

I would mention in passing that the endorsement by the September summit of the concept of responsibility to protect is, to a certain extent, a major development in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

I would conclude by saying that, like other colleagues, I listened carefully to the statements made by Mr. Guéhenno, Ms. Mayanja, Ms. Heyzer, Ms. Noori and Ms. Dandi. We also welcome the very interesting exchange of views which we had with non-governmental organizations during the Arria-formula meeting the day before yesterday, on the initiative of Denmark. I would like to thank all of them for their important contributions. They all can count on France to develop the "1325 reflex" in all forums in which we participate — existing forums and forums to be set up later.

Sir Emyr Jones Parry (United Kingdom): I have the honour to speak also on behalf of the European Union and those countries which have aligned themselves with this statement.

On behalf of the European Union, I would like to extend my particular thanks to the visiting speakers for their powerful presentations this morning and to you, Mr. President, for having brought us together. Events such as this help to underline the importance of this landmark resolution. It is now five years since resolution 1325 (2000) was adopted, and it is having an impact at the regional, national and international levels. But that is not in any sense an argument for complacency. More can and must be done.

The resolution draws attention to the central role that women play in conflict resolution. We have heard firsthand from a number of speakers today about how important it is to include women at all stages of the peace process. That inclusion helps to ensure wider support for the peace process itself, it increases legitimacy, and it contributes to building a comprehensive and sustainable peace.

Article 8 of the United Nations Charter and the Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) both commit us to ensuring the equal participation of women in international relations. That commitment is crucial to the successful implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). But we must also apply that commitment to all levels of decision-making — international, regional and national. One can look around the Council table and draw some conclusions from that statement.

One month ago, our leaders reiterated that "progress for women is progress for all" (General Assembly resolution 60/1, para. 58) and reaffirmed their commitment to the full and effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). They also, as colleagues have already remarked, committed themselves to establishing a Peacebuilding Commission, which now provides us with a unique opportunity to create a United Nations system that is capable of building and sustaining peace. We must bring these commitments together if we are to develop a coherent and holistic approach to peacebuilding and at the same time guarantee a smooth and enduring transition to peace with the full involvement of all actors. Women must be able to participate in, and benefit from, all peacebuilding activities.

A strong commitment to conflict prevention and peacebuilding can be met only, in our view, by a strong commitment to ensuring that all members of society are able to take an active role in building peace. It is therefore only by ensuring the full inclusion of women

in the political process that we can guarantee just and peaceful societies.

The European Union believes that the Peacebuilding Commission should, as part of its mandate, ensure that women and women's groups are represented in peace processes.

The Commission should ensure that work to promote a more coherent and more integrated approach to peacebuilding takes place and that it benefits from the advantages of the experience and knowledge that women can bring to the negotiating table, as we have heard this morning. By bringing together peacekeeping operations and development partners, the Commission can ensure that progress is made to integrate gender into the political process of a post-conflict country and that it is not lost once the immediate post-conflict phase ends.

One important way for the United Nations to support women's rights in post-conflict situations is by supporting legal systems that recognize and protect those rights. That is a significant role for the proposed new Rule of Law Assistance Unit. We hope the Unit not only helps the United Nations devote attention and resources to the establishment of the rule of law but also ensures women's access to and participation in justice.

For its part, the European Union is considering a number of measures to implement resolution 1325 (2000) within our European Security and Defence Policy. Those measures recognize the important role that women play in promoting peace and security. The measures contribute to the EU's general approach to gender mainstreaming and are a step towards a more systematic integration of a gender perspective in the Union's external relations.

The measures include recognizing the need for improved gender balance in operations under the European Security and Defence Policy, promoting the role of women in peacebuilding, increasing dialogue with local and international women's groups, protecting women and girls affected by conflict and training European Union personnel, particularly those taking part in EU crisis management operations, on gender and awareness-raising.

The European Union is also working within the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to promote resolution 1325 (2000). A draft decision on women in conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation will be considered by the OSCE Ministerial Council in December. The OSCE will use the resolution to build on and reinforce its 2004 decision to establish an action plan to promote gender equality. That commits the OSCE secretariat to developing further strategies to increase the number of women in the OSCE secretariat, its institutions and its field missions. Sir, there is coherence here with what your presidency has been saying about relations with regional organizations. It all comes together sensibly.

We welcome the United Nations system-wide action plan produced by the Secretary-General, which will help ensure closer attention to gender perspectives in conflict prevention and peacekeeping activities. As we move towards implementation, coordination within the United Nations will continue to be key. But the United Nations cannot work alone. More needs to be done at the national level. Member States need to take responsibility for the success of resolution 1325 (2000) and ensure that it is integrated into their national policies and training programmes if there is to be real progress.

The widespread mainstreaming of gender considerations into all policies and programmes at the international and national levels is also a crucial factor in the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse. The European Union condemns all violations of the human rights of women and girls in situations of armed conflict and the use of sexual exploitation, violence and abuse. The EU urges the complete cessation by all parties of such acts with immediate effect. The EU stresses the need to end impunity for such acts as part of a comprehensive approach to seeking peace and to create a safer and more sustainable environment for women's participation.

Resolution 1325 (2000) urges Member States to produce their own national implementation strategies — we have heard quite a lot about that this morning — ensuring the promotion of the resolution in domestic policies through, for example, mainstreaming gender across government systems and providing appropriate gender training, including in military, police and civilian components of Government.

A number of European Union countries are now beginning to address the need to develop their own national action plans or national-level strategies. Those

will encourage a system-wide approach that links development, humanitarian and defence work. Such strategies not only will ensure that Member States have a coherent cross-government approach to resolution 1325 (2000) but should also provide a standard against which government policies can be measured. They also provide a useful means to identify and overcome ongoing barriers to the full implementation of the resolution.

Implementing resolution 1325 (2000) remains as important today as it was five years ago — if not more so. We must do justice to the resolution, ensure that women are full and equal participants in peace processes and, through that, create sustainable peace.

The other essential element of the resolution is that we recognize the role of women in conflict and what women have to suffer, and why, in the post-conflict phase. We have to pay particular attention to those problems, as well as build in the right of women to participate in building peace.

As has been demonstrated so clearly today, civil society, the United Nations and Member States must continue to work together to ensure full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) at all levels. The presidential statement proposed for adoption today demonstrates our commitment to the principles of the resolution. We must make sure that we fulfil that commitment. We must place greater emphasis on putting into practice the provisions of the resolution and, as representatives of the United Nations, ensure that we tackle the problems of abuse, especially sexual misconduct by personnel actually out there in the field in United Nations peacekeeping missions.

The President: I take it that Council members agree to invite Ms. Margherita Boniver, Deputy Foreign Minister of Italy, to participate in the Council's discussion.

Therefore, on behalf of the Council, I extend a very warm welcome to the Deputy Foreign Minister of Italy, and I kindly invite her to take a seat at the Council table and to make her statement.

Ms. Boniver (Italy): It is a great honour for me to be here today to discuss the effect of conflicts on women and girls and the key role that they can play in the peace process.

Let me say first that Italy fully aligns itself with the statement made by the United Kingdom on behalf of European Union.

Women are the chosen victims of modern wars par excellence. Most of today's conflicts are essentially internal conflicts, leading to political and economic chaos, human insecurity and terrible suffering for the entire civilian population. Uncontrolled groups of criminals thrive in such an environment. Those elements, as a whole, make women especially vulnerable. Indeed, in a growing number of cases, atrocities against women are used as a warfare tactic.

These, of course, are very well-known facts, and the United Nations has taken steps to fight such patterns, starting with Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and as recently as the latest report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security, published on 10 October (S/2005/636). The report's action plan defines 12 areas of action, which are illustrated in the lengthy annex to the report, indicating strategies, concrete steps, players and timetables.

Moreover, the declaration and action plan of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, on the theme "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century" (General Assembly resolutions S-23/2 and S-23/3), recognize that men and women are affected differently by armed conflict, making a gender approach absolutely essential when enforcing international human rights and international humanitarian law. A historic breakthrough was the definition in the Statute of the International Criminal Court of sexual violence against women as a deliberate instrument of war, to be treated, in particularly heinous cases, as a crime against humanity.

Definitely, women have a major role to play in peacekeeping and peacebuilding. As a consequence, a more systematic approach to gender mainstreaming should be taken in those processes. Practical guidelines based on lessons learned should be developed that indicate how to foster the full, active involvement of women in the rebuilding of institutions and of society. States should be urged to compile national rosters of potential women candidates for positions in the areas of conflict-prevention and post-conflict rehabilitation.

In Darfur, in the Sudan, gender-based violence, such as mass rape and mutilation, is a common means used to uproot rural communities. In Chad, near the

Sudanese border, women and girls fleeing the violence in Darfur risk being assaulted and raped by civilians or militia members while going about everyday tasks such as collecting water, fuel or animal feed. Let there be no mistake: these acts are crimes against humanity and should be classified as such. We thus strongly appeal to the Government of the Sudan to do everything in its power to resolve the humanitarian crisis in Darfur.

The end of hostilities does not always translate into the end of violence. Women in post-conflict situations have reported rapes, sexual assaults and trafficking. The survivors often suffer from psychological trauma, permanent physical injury and long-term health risks, especially HIV/AIDS. As we all have very sadly learned, the face of HIV/AIDS is a woman's face. Moreover, hundreds of thousands of women still in refugee camps face serious threats to their safety or are forcefully prevented from participating in political activity.

I now wish to pay tribute to Aung San Suu Kyi, leader of Burma's pro-democracy movement and Nobel Peace Prize laureate. This week marks the tenth anniversary of her nearly total isolation under house arrest. Her only crime, after winning the 1990 national elections, is having worked to establish democracy in her country, free her people and promote civil and political rights. Her immediate release is of paramount importance to restore a positive climate for national reconciliation.

Women are not just the victims of armed conflicts. They are also combatants, leaders, negotiators, peacemakers, peacekeepers and activists. Denying these women their basic human rights is thus also a major obstacle to the reconstruction process. Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) formally acknowledges their crucial role in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts at the national, regional and international levels.

The potential of women in the reconstruction phase is remarkably clear, for example, in Iraq. Women there have fought for decades to gain their rights to vote, to work, to dress and to be educated as they choose. What they need now are assurances that they will not be excluded from the process of democratization to which they have contributed so much and have so much to contribute. This is why Italy has just started a very ambitious training programme for Iraqi women professionals.

The experience of the European Union shows the crucial importance of involving female personnel in the whole peace process. The increased presence of women in the civilian, military and police components of peacekeeping in the former Yugoslavia and in Afghanistan, for example, has greatly improved relations with local communities and has facilitated communications with the most vulnerable groups, namely, women and children.

My personal experience suggests that a more proactive role for women in emergency situations can be better achieved when we take a comprehensive approach. This is what I have witnessed personally in Afghanistan, where Italy, as members know, is the lead country for the reform of the justice system, and where we pay special attention to projects and activities that safeguard the basic rights of women.

Perhaps our greatest challenge is to ensure that all the main legal and judicial programmes promote gender mainstreaming and a gender perspective, actually implementing the approach that emerged from the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) Conference on Gender Justice in Post-Conflict Situations. That is a goal we strive to achieve by working closely with the Ministry of Women's Affairs in Afghanistan, the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission and associations of Afghan women professionals. We are also defining a strategy to establish legal aid centres to allow women to exercise their basic rights. To ensure Afghan ownership of the process, the Legal Department of the Ministry for Women's Affairs — which has been strengthened through capacity-building activities — has been asked to play a fundamental role.

Last but not least, women need to participate fully in post-war elections, which are a fundamental stage in the reconstruction phase. Women must therefore be able to take part in them on an equal footing and be legally empowered to both vote and stand for election.

Here, too, the Afghan experience is enlightening. During two consecutive elections — the 2004 presidential elections and the recent parliamentary elections — the women of Afghanistan manifested their political awareness by turning out in overwhelming numbers at the polls and exercising a right that they had never known before. In so doing, they broke with tribal customs — which kept women at

home while only men participated in politics — and wholeheartedly embraced the opportunity to be directly involved in the making of their democratic State.

In closing, I cannot emphasize enough the strong link that exists between any peace process and the granting of full human rights — civil, political and economic rights — to women. The Secretary-General's report is an example of the ongoing progress in the field. Italy fully endorses it and will continue to support national representatives, members of civil society and all the international stakeholders working in crisis-stricken areas today, who ultimately are working, as we all are, to improve the lives of women.

Mr. Valle (Brazil): Brazil welcomes the initiative of the Romanian presidency to convene this open debate on women and peace and security. This is a proper and timely occasion to discuss the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), five years after the adoption of a text of great significance. We join other delegations in expressing our appreciation to the distinguished speakers for their presentations.

The importance of the full and effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) is outlined in the 2005 World Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1). We need to continue to persevere in our efforts to empower women in the various branches of United Nations peace and security activities, from conflict prevention to post-conflict reconstruction.

Over the past quinquennium, the Council has dealt with gender issues, not only in its periodic thematic debates, but also in tackling country-specific situations. Progress has been made in integrating gender perspectives into peacekeeping operations, with concrete implications for the system.

While acknowledging the essential contributions made by women as peacemakers and peacebuilders in many settings, we are confronted with the reality of under-representation of women in peace processes as a whole. We must, therefore, promote change in order to ensure full-fledged, or at least an increased rate, of female participation in decision-making, not only in ceasefire negotiations, but also in transitional processes.

The special needs of women and girls should be addressed in actions such as disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. With regard to transitional justice, the United Nations can work closely with national authorities in establishing programmes aimed at ensuring accountability of perpetrators of human rights violations, including gender-based violence.

In this respect, it is deeply regrettable that women continue to suffer serious impacts in conflicts. The despicable and recurrent practice of gender-based violence, especially rape and other forms of sexual abuse, is one of the worst challenges we face in terms of protection.

The issue of sexual abuse and exploitation by all categories of personnel in United Nations peacekeeping missions is also disturbing. We must condemn, in the strongest terms, all acts of sexual misconduct and fully implement codes of conduct and disciplinary procedures in order to prevent such acts from happening again and to ensure full accountability. We support the measures undertaken by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations on this issue. To face these and other gender challenges to peace and security, comprehensive strategies must be pursued, and concrete targets must be met.

My delegation is grateful to the Secretary-General for submitting to the Council an action plan (S/2005/636) aimed at implementing resolution 1325 (2000) across the United Nations system. Initiatives to expand training, not only for women's organizations, but also for peacekeeping personnel and capacity-building, could certainly be intensified. We also recognize the importance of identifying women candidates for senior and decision-making positions, including special representatives and envoys, with due regard to equitable geographical distribution. The Secretary-General's report also mentions that it is necessary to increase financial support for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), including through extra-budgetary resources.

In addition, the contribution of civil society, especially women's organizations, is fundamental in this process. Apart from the engagement with civil society at the national and regional levels, there have been increased informal exchanges between the Council and civil society organizations. In this respect, we thank Denmark for having organized an Arria Formula meeting that helped to prepare this discussion.

As for intergovernmental oversight, one cannot disregard the possibility of cooperation between the Security Council and the Economic and Social

Council, under article 65 of the Charter. The Peacebuilding Commission can contribute to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), and it will benefit from women's skills and perspectives in peacebuilding processes.

Finally, the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security report, entitled "From Local to Global: Making Peace Work for Women", notes that when women are excluded from peace negotiations and peacekeeping initiatives, peace will definitely not work for women.

The Security Council needs to ensure that gender concerns continue to be included in new peacekeeping mandates. In doing so, we will strengthen our commitment to gender mainstreaming, and we once again reaffirm the fundamental role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding.

Mr. Kitaoka (Japan): I wish to begin by expressing my delegation's gratitude to the Romanian presidency for organizing this open debate. I would also like to thank the five speakers at the beginning of this meeting for their insightful presentations and first-hand information.

Japan believes that it is important to ensure women's participation in all efforts to maintain peace and security, from peacemaking to peacekeeping to peacebuilding. In that regard, we welcome the outcome document of the 2005 world summit, which rightly underlined that point. We also welcome the decision to establish the Peacebuilding Commission and look forward to the Commission's contribution in this area.

Women are concerned about the way the peacemaking process is currently conducted. While women often organize at the grassroots level in order to promote peace, their access to the formal process continues to be limited. Why? One of the reasons, we believe, is that the actors concerned have not yet gained enough understanding about the advantages of having women involved in peace negotiations and about the concrete results that such involvement can produce. With women's participation at the negotiating table, we will be able to integrate women's needs and perspectives into peace agreements and settlement. In so doing, we can ensure the central role of women in subsequent peacekeeping and peacebuilding processes and in post-conflict society.

In the peace process in Burundi — as we saw in the video, for which we thank the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) — more than 50 women organized and presented recommendations to peace negotiators. Twenty-three of those recommendations were included in the final peace accord, which incorporated a strong recognition of the centrality of women's rights. In Afghanistan, 95 women were among the 502 delegates who participated in the constitutional Loya Jirga, undoubtedly contributing to the inclusion of a clause to guarantee equal rights and duties for men and women before the law in the country's first post-Taliban Constitution.

Citing those best practices and lessons learned, we must continue to advocate effectively for recognition of the importance of women's roles in all efforts aimed at achieving peace and security.

For successful peacebuilding, including the initial phase of development and reconstruction, self-help efforts and ownership by the local population are indispensable. In order to foster such self-help efforts and local ownership and ensure women's participation in the process, women need to be protected and empowered. Protection and empowerment are the central components of human security.

At this juncture, let me introduce one brief example of what Japan is doing on the ground based on this concept. In the Philippines, through the Japan Bank for International Cooperation, Japan is assisting community development programmes and regional infrastructure projects. In these projects, community groups drawn from the local population are taking the lead in developing and implementing different aspects of the programmes. What is unique about these projects is that widows who lost their husbands to conflict are given priority with regard to participation in these community groups. We believe that these projects will help women gain confidence and be empowered to assume roles as major contributors to development and reconstruction, and thus, ultimately, to lasting peace.

Finally, Japan welcomes the Secretary-General's system-wide action plan on the implementation of the resolution. We will study the plan in greater detail in due course, but today I would like to make two preliminary comments.

First, one of the major causes of sexual misconduct involving peacekeeping personnel is

considered to be the lack of training and education of soldiers by troop-contributing countries. It is my delegation's view that this perspective too should be taken into account in the formulation of the action plan.

And secondly, we welcome the assignment of gender advisers to peacekeeping operations and the expansion of their responsibilities, and we believe that it is necessary to evaluate how well they have carried out their duties and whether the peacekeeping structure, including at the higher levels, pays enough attention to those advisers and their work. Furthermore, in assigning gender advisers we should ensure the effectiveness of their efforts by avoiding duplication with work done in other similar schemes, for example by child protection advisers.

Mr. Wang Guangya (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I wish at the outset to thank you, Mr. President, for initiating and organizing today's meeting. I thank the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, for his report on the United Nations system-wide action plan (S/2005/636). Our thanks go also to Under-Secretary-General Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Ms. Rachel Mayanja, Ms. Noeleen Heyzer and other participants for their presentations this morning.

In his report, the Secretary-General makes many concrete recommendations for further implementation by the United Nations system of resolution 1325 (2000). We welcome his recommendations and express the hope that they can be effectively implemented.

This year marks both the fifth anniversary of the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and the tenth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing. Those anniversaries lend particular significance to this open debate on the question of women and peace and security.

Five years ago the Security Council adopted resolution 1325 (2000), which focused the international community's attention on the question of women and armed conflict and which provided guidance for the endeavour to promote gender equality, protect women's rights and expand the role played by women. In the five years since then — thanks to the efforts of the Secretariat, the relevant peacekeeping operations, the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, the United Nations Development Fund for Women and Member States — much has been achieved in implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). The international community now attaches greater importance to the role of women in the settlement of armed conflicts, and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has mandated that enhanced protection of women be a very important component of the daily work of peacekeeping operations. Both at Headquarters and in many peacekeeping operations, gender advisers have been appointed.

At the recent High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly, world leaders once again stressed the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding and reaffirmed their commitment to the full and effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

Five years on, when we look back on the road we have travelled and forward to the path ahead, we can see that a great deal of work remains to be done in attaining the goals defined in resolution 1325 (2000).

First, we must strive to eliminate the root causes of armed conflict and strengthen our conflict prevention and early warning systems in order to create an environment favourable to protecting women from the harm that is caused by war. In other words, we must cure the disease by addressing its root causes.

Secondly, crimes of sexual assault must be punished more harshly; violence against women must be more seriously investigated and its perpetrators must be brought to justice. United Nations peacekeeping operations must continue to pursue a zero-tolerance policy to ensure strict compliance with rules and adherence to standards.

Thirdly, women should be encouraged to participate in peace processes at all stages. In particular, it is essential to ensure that they have decision-making power so that the special needs and the role of women will be reflected in conflict and post-conflict processes. Women are both the primary victims of armed conflicts of all kinds and indispensable participants in the resolution of any conflict. Their ardent yearning for peace enables them to play a more important role in the promotion of peace processes.

Fourthly, a summary should be prepared of successful experiences in protecting women's rights, with a view to sharing and actively replicating them.

Efforts should be made to enhance awareness of the need to protect women's rights and to ensure that words are translated into deeds.

Fifthly, work carried out on this issue by the relevant bodies should be effectively coordinated. All parties should be encouraged to take steps with the strength born of collective action and to make every effort to achieve the best possible outcome. Organs such as the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council have been considering women's issues for many years and have rich experience to offer. The Security Council should coordinate its activities with theirs.

Women have played an important — indeed, irreplaceable — role in the formation of human civilization and the promotion of social development. Progress for women is progress for all of humankind. A popular Chinese saying has it that women hold up half of the sky. We hope that, through our common efforts, mothers, wives and daughters will no longer shed their tears at the horrors of war and that all our sisters worldwide will lead happy and peaceful lives. We believe that our world will then be a brighter and more beautiful place.

The President: A number of speakers remain on my list for this meeting. In view of the lateness of the hour, I intend, with the concurrence of the members of the Council, to suspend the meeting until 3 p.m.

The meeting was suspended at 1.30 p.m.